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Integration of ICT as Teaching and Learning Tool for Teachers of English Language in Schools

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Abstract

Literacy in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is basic to life in our modern technological society. In order to make the students literate for life-long learners and global citizens of the 21st century, we must successfully integrate Information Communication Technology into both the English curriculum and English teaching practices. The adoption of technology and innovation to instructing and learning problems has conveyed an incredible help to teaching as a whole. With the help of modern technology, teaching and learning procedures have become simpler, solid, genuine, appropriate to viable circumstances, pertinent to life, and retentive. This study is a descriptive research of the survey type. This study attempts to find out the ICT usage pattern of school English language teachers in Pondicherry. The sample used for this paper consisted of forty English language teachers randomly selected from ten schools in Pondicherry. A simple random sampling technique and self-structured validated questionnaire were used for the study. Findings of the study reveal that the English language schools teachers deem ICT only as an additional tool for teaching the children, whereas the traditional teaching method has been widely used for the teaching purpose.

Keywords: ICT, Integration, Learning tools, English, Schools

Introduction

We live in a time of innovation. Science and technology have left their imprints on each circle of human life. The greater part of the huge advancements that one can watch today can be ascribed to the effect of science and innovation. Mechanical progression and advancements in instructive exchanges have a noticeable effect on academic improvement and, in addition, organization. Conventional techniques for giving advanced education have turned out to be less spurring to the vast number of understudies. Now the part and utilization of innovation as an asset for educating of English language are expanding as teachers perceive its capacity to make both autonomous and community-oriented learning environments in which students can learn English with much ease. (Jameel, Ahmad) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a critical device amid the 21st century regarding the worldwide trade/sharing of learning.

Today science, data, and innovation (ICT) have left their effect on each part of human life. A large portion of the noteworthy improvements that one can watch today can be ascribed to the effect of science and innovation. Indeed, even in the training part, we witness that innovative headway and developments have had a noticeable effect and have changed a situation. Conventional techniques for bestowing advanced education have turned out to be less persuading. Here, innovation assumes an imperative part in making development and inspiration for the learners. "ICT" incorporates any correspondence gadget, for example, PC, cellular telephones, radio, TV, satellite framework, and so forth. Presently, the part and utilization of innovation as an apparatus for instructing English dialect is expanding as instructors have caught on to its capacity to make both autonomous and community-oriented learning environments in which understudies can learn English no sweat. The utilization of ICT in educating learning procedures is the need of the hour, and the teacher is relied upon to be conventional and the usage of technology in his/her learning process. Therefore, an educator needs to consider utilizing innovation as a part of giving training.

The English language is essential for most people in today's world, while technology development always has a very high and contributed to education, especially English. As English is one of the hard lessons, the teacher must generate interactive teaching and learning to make students interest. In the history of the development of education, information technology is part of the medium used to convey the message of science to many people, ranging from printing technology a few centuries ago, such as printed books, such as telecommunications to media, video, television, CD and voice recorded on tape. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) content in English allows students to develop and apply skills, knowledge, and understanding of ICT in their preparation and

presentation and the imaginative and critical thinking they undertake in English. The ICT content has been included in the content of this syllabus to ensure that all students have the chance to become proficient and the creative users of ICT are better able to demonstrate the syllabus outcomes of English through the effective use of ICT.

Significance of the Study

The study could help teachers and students use suitable ICT tools in teaching and learning the English language in schools, respectively. Moreover, it could untangle the level of teachers' and learners' exposure to ICT. The paper also would serve as an eye-opener for the government, education ministries, curriculum planners, schools, seekers of knowledge, and concerned bodies on the importance and challenges of integrating ICT into English language teaching and learning and panacea for the raised problems.

Literature Review

The importance of the teacher in the teaching and learning process cannot be underestimated. The function of the teacher is not diminished by the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a tool in this process. Students and teachers' use of ICTs appears to be very different, according on personal experience. If the advantages of ICT expenditures are to be realized, teacher training and ongoing appropriate professional development are required. As a tool, computer technology aids in the development of thinking skills, inclusive education, and the involvement of students in complicated topics, as well as the development of problem-solving techniques in group and individual accountability for improving their learning. The fast expansion of ICT has become one of the most significant subjects debated by educational researchers during the last two decades. Because of ICT's capacity to provide a dynamic and proactive teaching and learning environment, this is the case. Teachers must integrate ICT into their everyday teaching and replace conventional techniques with contemporary tools and facilities in order to keep up with the present digital environment. ICT enhances student engagement and information retention in the classroom: Students become more interested in their work when ICT is used in the classroom. This is due to the fact that technology allows for numerous methods to make it more interesting and pleasant to teach the same topics in different ways. ICT aids teachers in motivating pupils and increasing their enthusiasm for learning. For organisational preconditions, ICT aids the teacher (vision, policy and culture). It also aids teachers in obtaining staff assistance (knowledge, attitude, skills). One of the functions of ICT in education is to instil confidence in the use of information when it is required. ICT may be a strong tool for improving education quality and efficiency without requiring students to be physically present in the classroom. Distance education, flexibility, engagement, active learning, teamwork, and motivation are some of the characteristics of ICT-based training. (Farajollahi & Sanaye'i, 2009) Information and communication technology (ICT) has evolved and revolutionized our society, completely altering how people think, work, and live (Grabe, 2007). As a result, schools and other educational institutions that are responsible for preparing pupils to live in a "knowledge society" must include ICT into their curricula. (Ghavifekr, Afshari & Amla Salleh, 2012). According to Jones and Preece (2006), both students and teachers must learn to trust technology in order to improve technical performance, as well as increase adoption and minimise resistance to technology. To increase their faith in technology, teachers must be confident and proficient in using a variety of ICT tools. ICT could not be put to effective use for instructional delivery without teachers' competency and mastery abilities in ICT integration that is suited to their needs. Teachers should have a variety of technical and communication abilities in this respect, including the ability to use chat rooms, word processing skills, web page creation, and a variety of ICT applications such as File Transfer Protocol (FTP), compress and decompress of files, e.g., Win zip and so forth (Barker, 2002).

Research Questions

The research sought to provide answers to the following questions:

1. Does ICT improve the teaching of the English language?
2. Do teachers and students have access to the use of ICT tools?
3. Do English language teachers prefer teaching with ICT tools?
4. What are the ICT modes and its usage frequencies in teaching?

Methodology

This study is a descriptive research of the survey type. The target population was English language teachers in Pondicherry Schools. The respondents for the study comprised the English language teachers in the ten selected schools in Pondicherry. Through random sampling, a total of forty (40) respondents were selected. A self-constructed questionnaire was the instrument used for the collection of data. Section A of the instrument contained personal information about respondents, while Section B contained three questions requiring respondents to pick questions. It was constructed on a four-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree to enable respondents to indicate their level of agreement. An education expert validated the instrument in order to ensure face and content validity. Fifty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the target population, out of which 40 copies were returned.

Data Analysis

Using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage scores, the data collected were analysed. Table 1 shows that 11 (27.5%) of the respondents had B. Ed, 27 (67.5%) had a Degree while 2(5%) of the respondents had their qualification above Degree. About the gender distribution, 8 (20%) of the respondents were male, while 32(80%) were female. The table also shows that 34(85%) of the respondents were private school teachers, while 6(15%) were from government schools. Distribution of age revealed that 30

(75%) of the respondents fell in the age group below 35 years, 8(20%) of the respondents fell between 36-45 years of age, while 2(5%) of the respondents fell between 46 years and above. In terms of teaching experience, the study revealed that 16(40%) had teaching experience below five years while 24(60%) had teaching experience above five years.

Table 1: Information about the Respondents**Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Variables	Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Qualification Of teachers	B.Ed	11	27.5%
	Degree	27	67.5%
	Above Degree	2	5%
	Total	40	100%
Gender	Male	8	20%
	Female	32	80%
Total		40	100%
Schools	Government	6	15%
	Private	34	85%
Total		40	100%
Age	Below 35	30	75%
	36-45	8	20%
	46 and Above	2	5%
	Total	40	100%
Years of teaching experience	Below 5 years	16	40%
	Above 5 years	24	60%
Total		40	100%

Results*Research Question 1:***Table 2:** Does ICT improve the teaching of English language?

	Agree		Disagree	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Computer, teleconferencing and the Internet etc. improve the teaching of English language	38	95%	02	05%
Computer improves students' writing skills.	16	40%	24	60%
Educational programmes on radio and television are effective means of teaching English language.	35	87.5%	05	12.5%
Students learn faster and better when ICT tools are applied.	39	97.5%	01	2.5%

It can be seen from table 2, 38(95%) of the respondents have strongly stated that computers, teleconferencing, and the Internet, improve the teaching of the English language while 2(05%) did not agree with the view which is only very minority. While 16(40%) of the respondents upheld the view that computer improves students' writing skill, 24(60%) of the respondents were against this view. The study has produced positive findings where the educational programs on radio and television as an effective medium for English language teaching with 35(87.5%) respondents agreed while 05(12.5%) disagreed. Again, whether students learn faster and better when ICT tools are applied, 39(97.5%) of the respondents affirmed very positively while only 1(5%) disagreed. Hence, it can be concluded from this result that ICT improves English language teaching.

Research Question 2:

The results of the study reveals that 16(40%) English language teachers in Pondicherry agree that they are computer literate while 24(60%) say that they are yet get acquainted with ICT tools. Only 5(12.5%) of the respondents agreed that schools in Pondicherry are equipped with various ICT tools for effective teaching while 35(87.5%) asserted that schools in Pondicherry are do not have ICT tools. It is clear from the study that that majority of the English language teachers are in teaching with these modern technologies and there are no adequate provisions for the procurement of these tools.

Table 3: Do teachers and students have access to the use of ICT tools?

Item	Agree		Disagree	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
English language teachers in Pondicherry are computer literate.	24	60%	16	40%
Schools in Pondicherry are equipped with ICT tools for effective teaching.	05	12.5%	35	87.5%
Schools have facilitated the integration of ICT tools in teaching and learning in my school.	12	30%	28	70%

Research Question 3:

Table 4: Do English language teachers prefer teaching with ICT tools?

Item	Agree		Disagree	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Computer literate teachers are at advantage over the illiterate ones.	38	95%	02	05%
The traditional method of teaching is effective than the use of ICT in the English language class.	18	45%	22	55%
Teachers prefer the traditional method of teaching to ICT method.	16	40%	24	60%

It can be concluded from the above table that 38(95%) of the teachers agree that the teacher who knows computers has the edge over the other teachers who lack in the skill. Despite the factor that (18)45% of them responded that the traditional method of teaching is effective than the use of ICT in the English language class, (22)55% of the respondents think that the use of ICT can be an effective way of teaching than the traditional method of teaching. This point is proved again by the next question in which (24) 60% of the respondents have agreed to teach and learn through ICT.

Research Question 4:

What are the ICT modes and its usage frequencies in teaching?

SL.NO	Mode of Communication	Often		Sometimes		Never	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1.	Writing Board	25	62.5	10	25	5	12.5
2.	Projector	18	45	12	30	10	25
3.	Video Camera	2	5	6	15	32	80
4.	Multimedia Computer	12	30	15	37.5	13	32.5
5.	Internet	10	25	8	20	22	55
6.	Television/Video	4	10	3	7.5	33	82.5
7.	Printed Material	15	37.5	20	50	5	12.5

The response of the teachers to the question of the mode of communication opted for teaching to the students reveal that ICT tools have rarely used. Majority of the teachers i.e. 62.5% of prefer white board as the teaching aid for their teaching purpose. The most effective ICT tools such as video camera and television are the least opted mode of communication in their teaching. Furthermore, the finding of the research brings to the light that projectors and internet are moderately used in their teaching. Printed material also used by the average number of teachers.

Discussion

The findings of the research point out the scope and preference of English language teachers in adopting Information Communication and Technology for teaching and learning. As Lambardi (2007) says, the Internet provides valuable and authentic information for the learners, from experimentation to problem-solving. ICT helps the students to gather more information on the lessons learned from their educational institutions. Teachers who have responded to the questionnaire have raised the point in saying that the chalk and talk method of taking is no longer effective for teaching the students after the emergence of ICT. Hence, the teachers with ICT knowledge have the edge over the teachers who adopt the conventional teaching method and learning. A similar point of view has been time and again stressed by researchers. For example, Robinson and Zaitun (2006), in their research proved that teachers are aware of the merits inherent in integrating ICT into teaching and learning activities, but they are unable to use the ICT tools; as a respondent explained his view:

I know ICT tools can motivate pupils and help them better understand concepts, but I cannot conduct an ICT integrated lesson because many of the computers in the computer laboratory are not in proper working condition...I have no time, and I have to finish my syllabus. I have too many classes to handle, and right now, I cannot think of ICT integration...

A similar view has been expressed by the majority of the teachers in the school in Pondicherry. They opined that though there is an interest among them to apt for ICT in teaching the English language to the students and they too possess the ICT knowledge, the lack of ICT facilities and inaccessibility to them is a stumbling block to them a computer and other ICT tools.

Conclusion

Information and Communication Technology is undoubtedly a tool for teaching and learning space for English language teachers. This paper revealed that the usage of technology would serve better and aid the teaching of language skills. By providing authentic online materials, allowing access to data collection, and providing the space to upload and download or transfer information, ICT injects innovations to teaching methods and widens teachers' knowledge on the subject matter. Thus, one of the major recommendations to be proposed in this study is that the government and private educational institutions should provide adequate ICT facilities for enabling the interested teachers to proceed with teaching and learning through ICT. Besides, they also should conduct training to provide basic knowledge about ICT to teachers.

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